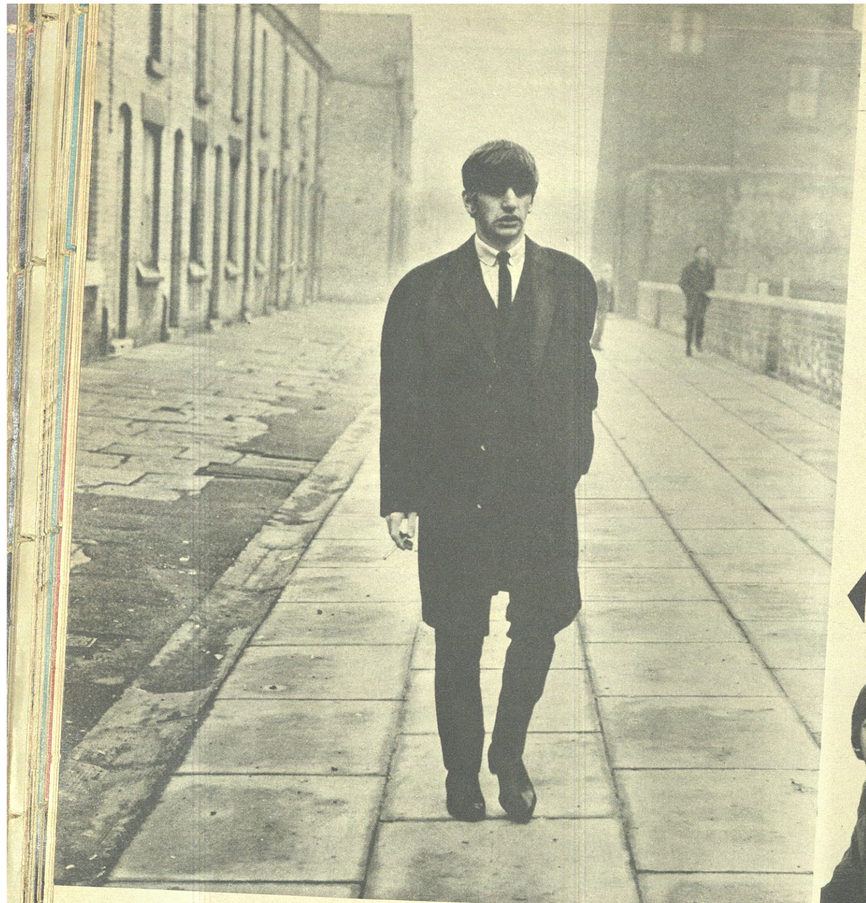


Every street corner in Liverpool has a Beatle memory. Wander round the city and look in at the places that were stepping stones to their success.

Ringo strolling down Admiral Grove, his old home. Modern houses have now been built on the right hand side.

SENTIMENTAL JOURNEY

BY BETTY HALE

WALK around Liverpool, the city packed with memories. The waterfront, the pierhead with its Victorian skyscraper, The Royal Liver Building, its floating landing stage, its cross-Mersey ferries, its big bus terminal, its Transatlantic liners swinging in to berth.

This is where The Beatles, looking less sure of themselves, with shorter hair and wearing jeans and leather jackets, used to kick around, planning for the future.

Everywhere you go, you feel The Beatle imprint.

Wander inland to NEMS record shop on Whitechapel, where Peter Brown is doing the job once filled by Brian Epstein. Brian, finding such a demand for discs by an unknown group, tracked them down to a place only a few hundred yards away, in Mathew Street.

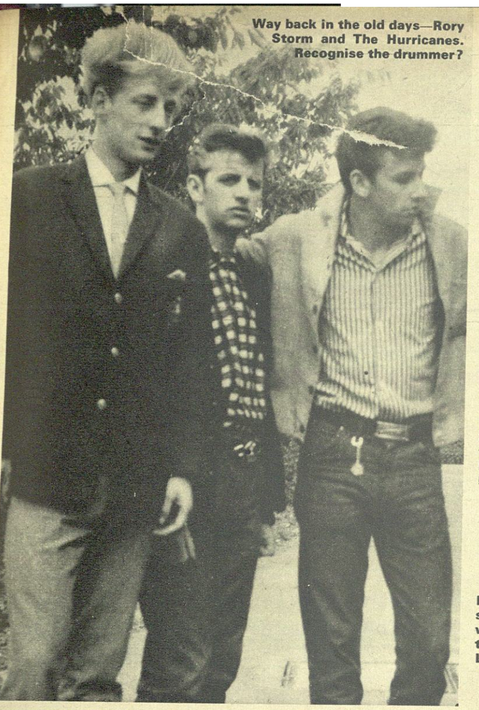
It's a narrow, cobbled little hill, which is Liverpool's fruit and produce market. There's a vast warehouse and underneath are big cellars running the length of the place. They're built of good, solid Victorian brick, whitewashed like wine cellars.

Back in January '57, when skiffle and jazz were riding high, somebody decided to lease part of these cellars for a club, because somehow jazz clubs always begin in cellars.

So was born The Cavern.

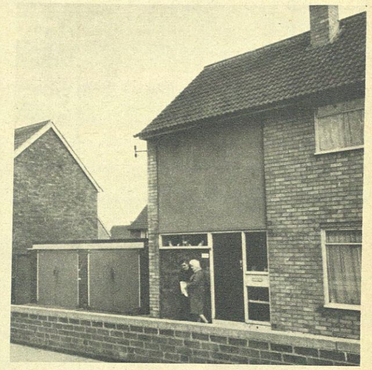
Remember The Beatles once saying: "In Liverpool, we play at The Cavern Club. It's a cellar under a fruit market." That was Paul.

8 Where it all began—NEMS Record Shop in Liverpool's Whitechapel.



Way back in the old days—Rory Storm and The Hurricanes. Recognise the drummer?

Lovely nosh up, with Rory Storm at the head of the table. John and Paul are on his right and George on his left.



Mr. and Mrs. Harrison outside the modern house which George bought for them in Macket's Lane, Liverpool.

John said: "It's a sort of railway tunnel. You can get 1,000 people in. There's a funny smell but we grew up there."

It still looks like rail arches and it still has that funny smell. But since fame came, they've enlarged it.

The Cavern was The Beatles' home. At lunchtime and at nights people from nearby shops, offices and factories crammed into the dark, bare cellar and listened to the Mersey beat and did the Cavern Stomp.

Bob Wooler, compere of The Cavern, knew The Beatles right back at the beginning when he booked them into The Litherland Town Hall (way up north of the city centre, beyond Bootle) at six pounds for the night. They were a sensation and drew a capacity crowd. It was their first big success in Britain after their Hamburg stint.

BOB also remembers that Billy Fury, another Liverpool lad, turned down The Beatles as his backing group. His manager liked them but Billy said "No," so the boys backed Johnny Gentle on a Scottish tour instead.

Call in at the cosy Jacaranda for a coffee. Look at the murals downstairs. You may still meet someone with memories of the old days when John, Paul, George and Ringo haunted the place. Like Rory Storm who was with them a lot in the old leather jacket days.

Then go on to The Blue Angel Club in Seel Street where the boys played for peanuts. Stroll along to Upper Parliament Street where, way back, for a modest fee, The Beatles played for a strip act in a dive there.

Trace out the places where they were born. Walk the pavements they walked, because even when they first hit the high spots, they still lived at home. Ringo's place was the most picturesque, in a terrace in a neat paved alley, so you could throw a ball over into your neighbour's parlour with no effort at all. And later, when fame came, his chauffeur-driven car would park at the end of Admiral Grove, in High Park Street, and the driver would get out and yell for Ringo. None of this walking right up to the door and saluting lark, not for a Liverpudlian.

Menlove and Mather Avenues, where John and Paul lived, weren't far apart. So it was easy for them to get together for dreaming up their music. These were wider, less friendly streets than Ringo's.

Go to Macket's Lane where George's parents now live and you may get a glimpse of Mrs. Harrison. She's become quite a celebrity as a Beatle mother. Requests come in from all over the country for her to open bazaars and fetes and go to special dinners.

Retrace your steps towards the Liver Building and stop by the Town Hall. Imagine the traffic at a standstill for this was the scene of The Beatles' greatest home triumph. Stand there, turn back the clock and remember. . . .

How proud Liverpool was when their boys got recognition. The headlines blazed on the local newspapers when they were presented to Princess Margaret, The Queen Mother, The Duke of Edinburgh; when they were on the bill of the Royal Command Performance in November '63. (Remember John's famous comment: "Those in the cheaper seats, please clap—and the rest of you, rattle your jewellery." They liked that, back home).

THE Beatles were on the London Palladium TV show. They won Variety Club Silver Heart awards, presented to them by Harold Wilson at a lunch in their honour. As Paul generously said: "I think they should give an award to Mr. Wilson."

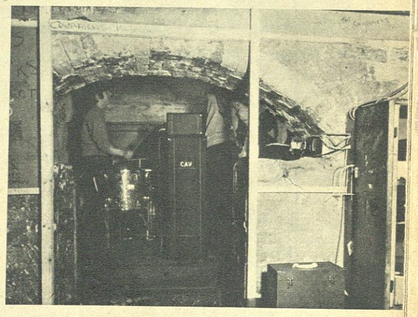
The gold and silver discs rolled in. And still Liverpool preened itself. Thousands greeted The Beatles at Speke Airport in July '64 at the beginning of their splendid home coming.

People lined the eight mile Merseyside route all the way north to this Town Hall where there was a glittering civic reception. The journey took nearly an hour.

About 100,000 Liverpudlians were out that night, showing what they thought of their heroes.

Go to Liverpool now and it's all quiet, apart from the milling traffic. But every place has a memory. Every coffee bar you go in, every shop has you wondering, have The Beatles been here? And you feel in your bones that they probably have. In fact, they may even be in the next street . . . now.

The Cavern today . . . but once it was Ringo who sat at the drums in this historic spot.



Underneath the arches in the world famous Cavern Club. The walls are still bare brick as in the old Beatle days.